ROCHESTER BUSINESS JOURNAL

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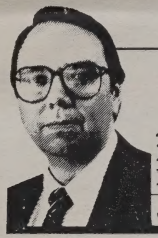
Thoughts on boosting county tourism efforts



ADVERTISING/ PUBLIC RELATIONS

John McGinnis

Perhaps Topfree Equality Day could do for Rochester what the swallows have done for Capistrano.

John McGinnis is an assistant professor of communications/journalism at St. John Fisher College.

☐ SEX IN ADVERTISING: Advertising in general was subject to some criticism during the public comment session at the start of the county Legislature meeting. Advocates of Topfree Equality Day urged legislators to support their movement, which holds that women as well as men should be allowed to go shirtless in public. One advocate criticized advertisers for using women with "enlarged breasts" in ads.

Members of this group apparently are unaware of the problems advertisers face when using nudity or blatant sexual appeals. Studies have shown that nudity in an ad can reduce the selling power of that ad. This is because people who see the ad are so mesmerized by the sexual message that they forget to notice the product. This does not make for a successful campaign.

☐ NEW TOURISM IDEA: Of course, with all the talk about special events and tourism at the county Legislature meeting, I am surprised that no one came up with the idea of supporting Topfree Equality Day as a special event for Monroe County, something like Oktoberfest. It would be great for drawing attention to the city; last year's topless protest gained national publicity. Perhaps Topfree Equality Day could do for Rochester what the swallows have done for Capistrano and what the buzzards have done for Hinckley, Ohio. For tourists, it also could give new meaning to the slogan "Rochester—A Welcome Surprise."

WILLIAM J. BROWN
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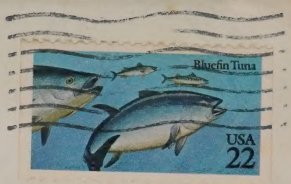

Kathie Reilly
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headlines

Gazette Telegraph wire services

the nation

■ If men can do it, then why can't women?

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Seven women were arrested Saturday after they stripped to the waist in a city park to protest what they called a sexist state law forbidding women, but not men, to go topless in public.

"What we're out to do is educate people, confront people, and encourage women to resist discriminatory laws on all levels," said Nikki Craft, 36, of Oshkosh, Wis., who was among those arrested at Highland Park.

"There were about 600 gawkers" at the park in addition to the demonstrators, one police officer said. "There was an unusual amount of joggers over there," added police Capt. Anthony F. Leonardo.

in memory of the voices we have lost

Dear William Brown—

Thank you very much for sending us a copy of your paper The Lesbian Nudist. I know women will find it useful and it provides important references for us—

best to you

Deborah Edel

ATA ACF - PO Box 1258 - NY. NY 10116

Court hearing today for women who doffed shirts to protest law

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) — Seven women who went topless to protest a state law that allows men but not women to doff their shirts will get their day in court today as they seek to challenge the law's constitutionality.

"It's gender discrimination, no matter how you look at it," said protest organizer Ramona Santorelli, 28. "Why is it so controversial for women to want to do a normal thing? It's perfectly normal to want to bathe in the sun."

The women were arrested Saturday on charges of indecent exposure at their "topless picnic" in a city park.

They appeared in court Monday for arraignment before Judge Herman J. Walz. Walz adjourned the case to today, said chief clerk Michael Colopietro. If convicted, the women face up to 15 days in jail or a $250 fine.

"We feel that we accomplished what we wanted to," Mary Lou Schloss, 38, of Rochester, said. "We were arrested and we are going to take it to court and test the constitutionality."

The women say they will take their case to the state's highest court, the Court of Appeals.

The women are basing their challenge of state law on the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.